United Nations A/72/926–S/2018/669

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
10 July 2018

Original: English

General Assembly
Seventy-second session
Agenda item 65
Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

Security Council
Seventy-third year

Letter dated 2 July 2018 from the Permanent Representatives of Germany, Namibia and Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Germany, together with Spain and Namibia, has the honour to transmit herewith the Chair's summary (see annex) of the debriefing in New York on the 2018 annual capital-level meeting of the Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network, which was held in Berlin, Germany, on 9 and 10 April 2018. The New York debriefing was co-organized by our three countries on 24 May 2018 at Headquarters as a follow-up to the Berlin meeting to discuss actions to be taken in New York.

The summary contains the numerous and practical recommendations for the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda that were made by participants during the meeting.

We should be grateful if the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 65, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Christoph **Heusgen**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Neville Melvin **Gertze**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Jorge **Moragas**
Ambassador
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Annex to the letter dated 2 July 2018 from the Permanent Representatives of Germany, Namibia and Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Debriefing on the April 2018 Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network meeting in Berlin, and follow-up actions in New York

Thursday, 24 May 2018

Chair's summary

On 24 May 2018, New York representatives of the Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network met in New York for a debriefing on the annual capital-level meeting of the Network, which was held in Berlin, Germany, on 9 and 10 April 2018 under the theme "Building alliances to advance the women and peace and security agenda". About 60 permanent missions to the United Nations were represented at the debriefing, along with United Nations agencies and civil society organizations.

The Network currently has a membership of more than 80 States Members of the United Nations and regional organizations.[1] The leadership troika of the Network comprises Germany as current Chair of the Network, Spain as Chair for 2017 and Namibia as Chair for 2019. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) serves as the permanent secretariat of the Network.

The debriefing, which was held at Headquarters, was hosted by the Permanent Representatives of Germany, Namibia and Spain to the United Nations, in collaboration with UN-Women, at the level of permanent and deputy permanent representatives of missions to the United Nations. The meeting objectives were:

(a) To provide an overview of the activities of the Network to date;

(b) To share highlights and recommendations from the Berlin meeting, including the joint communiqué;

(c) To discuss how to translate the recommendations and outcomes of the Berlin meeting into concrete actions in the Security Council and other processes in New York and in capitals.

Discussion summary

Interventions were made by the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, Christoph Heusgen, the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations, Jorge Moragas, and the Deputy Executive Director, Intergovernmental

[1] Afghanistan, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay, African Union, Council of Europe, Economic Community of West African States, European Union, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Union for the Mediterranean.

Support and Strategic Partnerships Bureau at UN-Women, Åsa Regnér. Further interventions were made by the representatives of Colombia, the Economic Community of West African States, Sweden, Mexico, the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, Hungary, Canada, France, El Salvador, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Malaysia, Morocco and Liechtenstein. The discussion was moderated by the leader of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Kaoru Okuizumi.

Drawing from the communiqué of the Berlin meeting, attendees emphasized the importance of collaboration between local, national and regional actors to implement the women and peace and security agenda. They discussed how concrete action should be taken in New York to increase and safeguard gender expertise and women's participation in the security sector and in peacekeeping missions. Specific recommendations were made for comprehensive mainstreaming of the women and peace and security agenda into all relevant United Nations forums and to strengthen women and peace and security accountability mechanisms. Also underscored was the necessity for Member States to push back against the shrinking space for civil society. The importance of more focused collaboration between Network members serving on the Security Council and strengthening the Network's link with other mechanisms was also highlighted.

Summary of recommendations

Participation and representation

- Member States are encouraged to join the Network and ensure representation at the capital level at the 2019 annual meeting of the Network in Windhoek, Namibia.
- Include women briefers from Governments and civil society working on the ground at open debates and side events in all relevant United Nations forums, including the Security Council.
- Advocate gender expertise at the Secretariat and that women leaders be appointed as Secretary-General and Deputy Secretaries-General.
- Encourage the use of gender-disaggregated data to correctly diagnose women and peace and security problems and relevant statistics to enable the right actions to be taken.
- Ensure gender expertise in the field — senior gender advisers, women in peacekeeping operations and female personnel in other positions — with the support of defence ministries.
- Support the whole staffing of peacekeeping missions to include women and child protection advisers, judicial affairs and human rights officers and police officers who focus on sexual and gender-based violence.
- Promote a gender perspective in all peacekeeping operations at all levels, starting from the planning process, as well as a greater presence of women in peace negotiations, as mediators, candidates for high-level political operations and diplomats in multilateral forums.
- Member States should provide political and financial support for the work of women peacebuilders at the national, regional and international levels, particularly in the context of daily threats and intimidation.

- The Network should exercise its collective responsibility to protect civil society and women's rights organizations, and to preserve their rights and access.

Accountability and advocacy

- Member States should draw on the positive experiences made — across regions — with the designation of a specific focal point for women and peace and security and the adoption of a national action plan based on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). National action plans should be complemented with action plans at the local, subregional and regional levels.
- Establish a stronger link between the implementation of the legally binding Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the women and peace and security agenda.
- Make better use of the sanctions regimes of the Council to help to end impunity for sexual violence.
- Ensure more regular reactions of the Council in the form of press communiqués, press statements, etc., in any instance of conflict-related sexual violence.
- Ensure the application of a more gendered lens to national action plans and strategies on preventing and countering violent extremism.
- Engage men and boys in implementing the women and peace and security agenda and urge the Council to pay more consistent attention to sexual violence against men and boys.
- Network members should advocate gender considerations and the women and peace and security agenda in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, the review in June of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the second United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit, also in June.
- The mandates of peacekeeping missions should include the specific concerns of the women and peace and security agenda, including accountability for conflict-related sexual violence.
- The Network should make an impact on the language and implementation of the Council's mandate and highlight how civil society can contribute to the women and peace and security elements of the mandate implementation.
- Members of the Network who are also members of the Council should form a small group of friends in the Council and work closely to ensure the implementation of Network recommendations.

Building alliances

- Collaborate with existing mechanisms, such as the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security, the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security, the Group of Friends for Gender Parity and the International Gender Champions initiative on panel parity.
- Introduce the Berlin meeting communiqué and the issues raised in Network discussions to the Peacebuilding Commission in order to inform the work of the Commission.
- Developing and developed countries should work together more closely during negotiations in all domains at the United Nations and to ensure gender-sensitive declarations that include gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

- The Network should be vigilant and use its collective political strength to prevent the rollback of progress in women and peace and security issues, whether in constitutional or legislative reform.
- The Network should continuously highlight women and peace and security issues that are not in the spotlight.

Planned activities of the Network in 2018

The Network plans to host a side event on the margins of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly and an expert-level meeting in New York in the fourth quarter. The Network will also issue joint statements and newsletters over the course of the year.